EDU 221

Spring 2013

Curriculum Instruction Assessment (CIA)

UbD Reflections –Chapter 1

In Chapter 1, of *Integrating Differentiated Instruction & Understanding by Design*, the authors C. Tomlinson and J. McTighe describe the symbiotic relationship between the Understanding by Design (UbD) model and the Differentiated Instruction (DI) method. The text details how these two approaches complement each other in way that allows educators to create meaningful lessons, which also accommodate a full spectrum of learning needs. Where the UbD model (mostly) focuses on how to design and implement a curriculum, DI focuses on the diverse needs of those being taught. As I have yet to design a curriculum, I really appreciated the way the authors outlined and provided scenarios that detailed the interaction between the two approaches.

I found one idea, presented in the text, to be really powerful. Axiom 5 describes the UbD component of student exploration and self-assessment. This is then followed by its DI corollary. This corollary suggests that even students who may not yet have achieved all of the basic concepts, should, and need to partake in a discussion of ideas before they can be expected to achieve the desired goals. I had never considered the discussion being the crystalizing factor in understanding key concepts. Prior to this, I would have thought it would be difficult to discuss a topic you did not have a solid foundation in. The notion that it is discussion which aids in the building of this foundation seems so obvious now, but it is not something I would have thought of myself. I would definitely want to incorporate this practice into my classroom.